

U.S.S.N.: 10/710,454

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DEC 29 2006

REMARKS

In the Final Action, the drawings were objected to because the locking device 44 is not shown in the drawings. Figure 1 shows locking device designated by reference number 24. For that reason, paragraph [0029] of the specification has been amended to replace "locking device 44" with "locking device 24."

Claims 1-3, 5, and 9 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by the Takata reference (U.S. Serial No. 2004/0183655). Claims 6 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious the Takata reference in view of the Meinke reference (U.S. Patent No. 6,264,257). Claims 10, 11, 13, and 17-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over the Takata reference in view of the Geil reference (U.S. Patent No. 6,181,024). Claims 14, 15, and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) obvious in view of the Takata reference and the Geil reference in further view of the Meinke reference. With this Amendment, independent claim 1 has been amended to overcome these rejections.

In particular, claim 1 now recites the drive train mechanism having a sufficiently high ratio such that an initial movement of the handle mechanism generates a significantly larger movement to operate the switch device. This subject matter was disclosed in the original application (paragraphs [0028], [0029] and [0031]; Figures 2, 3A, 3B, 4A, and 4B). Claim 1 further recites the damping mechanism coupled to the door handle mechanism or the drive train mechanism for slowing movement of the door handle mechanism and the drive train mechanism. The damping mechanism was disclosed in the original application (paragraphs [0032] and [0033]; Figure 6). Applicants respectfully submit that none of the cited art, whether taken individually or in any permissible combination, discloses the claimed drive train mechanism and damping mechanism.

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In view of the foregoing, all of the claims remaining in the case, namely claims 1-3, 5-7, 9-11, 13-15, 17, and 21 are in proper form and patentably distinguish from the prior art. Accordingly, allowance of the claims and passage of the application to issuance are respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
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